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PAKISTAN : A beaconhouse school expels children for being Ahmadis

A beaconhouse school expels children for being Ahmadis

International supporters of the largest world's private school network should hold it accountable for participating in the Pakistani anti-Ahmadi bigotry.

By Massimo Introvigne

Bitter Winter (11.10.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3SZQCf3> – Can children be expelled from a school just because of their religion? The answer today in Pakistan is yes. Four children have been expelled from the Mithial Campus of The Educators School Network in Attock, Punjab.

The only reason given for the expulsion is that they belong to the “Qadianat Religion,” a derogatory term to designate the Ahmadis.

The Ahmadis are a persecuted religious minority founded within Islam by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908). Conservative Muslims accuse Ahmad of having considered himself a “prophet,” in breach of the Islamic doctrine that maintains that there can be no prophet after Muhammad.

The Ahmadi formula for Ahmad, “at the same time a prophet and a follower of the Holy Prophet [Muhammad],” is not enough to establish their orthodoxy in the eyes of Muslim clerics. For them, the Ahmadis are non-Muslim heretics. They are severely persecuted in Pakistan through specific laws that make them second class citizens prevented from voting and holding office.

What happened in Attock is an international scandal because of what Beaconhouse and The Educators School Network are. They claim to be the largest private school in the world, through 900 campuses in more than 200 cities, and more than 200,000 students.

The problem with Beaconhouse, established in 1975 in Lahore and now present in several countries, including in the United Kingdom, is that, while founded by Muslims, it is not a confessional Muslim school. It claims to be inspired by Maria Montessori, the Italian Theosophist and liberal educator renowned for her innovative pedagogy and for her campaigns for democracy and against racism and religious discrimination. These values are advertised when Beaconhouse promotes its

schools and seeks donations.

It is inconceivable that Beaconhouse can at the same time presents itself as a beacon of tolerance and peace following Montessori's ideas, and participate in Pakistani intolerance and bigotry against the Ahmadis. Those who allow Beaconhouse schools to operate and collect donations in democratic countries should perhaps take a second look at the organization.

Photo: Children at the Mithial Campus of The Educators celebrating Pakistan's Defence Day. From Facebook.

Massimo Introvigne (born June 14, 1955 in Rome) is an Italian sociologist of religions. He is the founder and managing director of the Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR), an international network of scholars who study new religious movements. Introvigne is the author of some 70 books and more than 100 articles in the field of sociology of religion. He was the main author of the *Enciclopedia delle religioni in Italia* (*Encyclopedia of Religions in Italy*). He is a member of the editorial board for the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* and of the executive board of *University of California Press' Nova Religio*. From January 5 to December 31, 2011, he has served as the "Representative on combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination, with a special focus on discrimination against Christians and members of other religions" of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). From 2012 to 2015 he served as chairperson of the Observatory of Religious Liberty, instituted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to monitor problems of religious liberty on a worldwide scale.

[Further reading about FORB in Pakistan on HRWF website](#)

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